

Proceedings of the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union Records Committee

Thomas A. Tustison, Chairman

The most recent meeting of the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union Records Committee (MOURC) was conducted online on 6 December 2020. In attendance and voting at this meeting were MOURC members Dedrick A. Benz, Rebecca R. Engdahl (alternate), Andrew R. Forbes, Anthony X. Hertzel, Ann E. Kessen, Douglas W. Kieser, William C. Marengo, John P. Richardson (alternate), Steven P. Stucker (alternate), and Thomas A. Tustison (Chair).

At, or subsequent to, the meeting, the following records were voted on (most electronically) and were Accepted:

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) [Accidental], 17 July 2019, Prairie Island, Winona County (record #2019-068, vote 7-0). Three adults, photographed. First county record.

Eurasian Wigeon (*Mareca penelope*) [Casual], 25 March 2021, Anderson Lake Wildlife Management Area, Lincoln County (record #2021-009, vote 7-0).

Eurasian Wigeon, 10-30 April 2021, Albany Wastewater Treatment Ponds, Stearns County (record #2021-010, vote 7-0). Adult, photographed.

Black-necked Stilt (*Himantopus mexicanus*) [Casual], 10 April 2021, High Island Lake, Sibley County (record #2021-011, vote 7-0). Two adults, photographed. Record early date. There is an impressive total of 14 records of this species in the first five months of 2021.

Black-necked Stilt, 30 April 2021, Armstrong Wetland Restoration, Steele County (record #2021-015, vote 7-0). Adult, photographed.

Black-necked Stilt, 1-2 May 2021, Rice Lake, Carver and Hennepin counties (record #2021-016, vote 7-0). Adult, photographed. The bird was seen by many observers in both Carver and Hennepin portions of Rice Lake.



Black-necked Stilt, 14 May 2021, Steele County. Photo by Anthony X. Hertzel.

Black-necked Stilt, 3 May 2021, Straight River Marsh, Steele County (record #2021-017, vote 7-0). Adult, photographed.

Black-necked Stilt, 5-15 May 2021, Armstrong Wetland Restoration, Steele County (record #2021-018, vote 7-0). Pair of adults, photographed.

Black-necked Stilt, 6-12 May 2021, Lone Tree Lake, Lyon County (record #2021-027, vote 7-0). Adult, photographed. Two Black-necked Stilts were reported from the southeast portion of Lone Tree Lake as early as 2 May 2021; however, this observation was not documented.

Black-necked Stilt, 9 May 2021, Armstrong Wetland Restoration, Steele County (record #2021-019, vote 7-0). Three adults, photographed.

Black-necked Stilt, 12 May 2021, Lake Maria near New Munich, Stearns County (record #2021-028, vote 7-0). Adult, photographed.

Black-necked Stilt, 21 May 2021, Curtis Lake, Yellow Medicine County (record #2021-034, vote 7-0). Adult, photographed.



Wilson's Plover, 14 May 2021, Minnesota Point, Duluth, St. Louis County. Photo by Peder H. Svingen.

Black-necked Stilt, 22 May 2021, Lone Tree Lake, Lyon County (record #2021-035, vote 7-0). Adult, photographed.

Black-necked Stilt, 22 May 2021, Wildlife Drive, Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge, Sherburne County (record #2021-036, vote 7-0). Two adults, photographed.

Black-necked Stilt, 23-25 May 2021, High Island Lake, Sibley County (record #2021-040, vote 7-0). Adult, photographed.

Black-necked Stilt, 24 May 2021, Stevens County (record #2021-041, vote 7-0). Two adults, photographed.

Black-necked Stilt, 26 May 2021, Paul Hugo Farms Wildlife Management Area, Washington County (record #2021-042, vote 7-0). Pair of adults, photographed.

Wilson's Plover (*Charadrius wilsonia*) [Accidental], 14-16 May 2021, Minnesota Point, beach adjacent to Sky Harbor Airport, St. Louis County (record #2021-030, vote 7-0). Adult, photographed. Fourth state and third spring record. All four state records are from Minnesota Point, Duluth, St. Louis County.

Red Knot (*Calidris canutus*) [Casual], 10 Au-

gust 2019, Interstate Island Wildlife Management Area, St. Louis County (record #2019-070, vote 5-2). Adult. The observer states that "No notes were taken at the time of the observation, as the species was still considered Regular in the state at the time." This explains the lack of details in the write-up and subsequently the two votes to not accept. It was not until publication of MOURC's 2019 *Checklist of the Birds of Minnesota* in October 2019 that this species was retroactively listed as Casual effective 1 January 2019.

Red Knot, 28 July 2020, 615th Avenue, the bay at the north end of Marsh Lake (locally known as the "West Pool"), near Correll, Big Stone County (record #2020-087, vote 7-0). Adult, photographed.

Red Knot, 22 May 2021, Hickory Township, Pennington County (record #2021-037, vote 7-0). Adult, photographed.

Ruff (*Calidris pugnax*) [Casual], 26 July 2020, 615th Avenue, the bay at the north end of Marsh Lake (locally known as the "West Pool"), near Correll, Big Stone County (record #2020-086, vote 7-0). Reeve, photo-



Red Phalarope (left), 27 May 2021, Browerville, Todd County. Photo by Becca Engdahl.



Ancient Murrelet, 17 January 2021, Stony Point, St. Louis County. Photo by Anthony X. Hertzell.

graphed.

Red Phalarope (*Phalaropus fulicarius*) [Casual], 27 May 2021, Browerville Wastewater Treatment Plant, Todd County (record #2021-043, vote 7–0). Age undetermined, transitioning into alternate plumage, photographed. First county record. This represents only the fourth spring record — all of which were discovered during the last week of May.

Ancient Murrelet (*Synthliboramphus antiquus*) [Accidental], 17 January 2021, Stony Point, St. Louis County (record #2021-006, vote 7–0). Adult, photographed. Eighth state and second winter record.

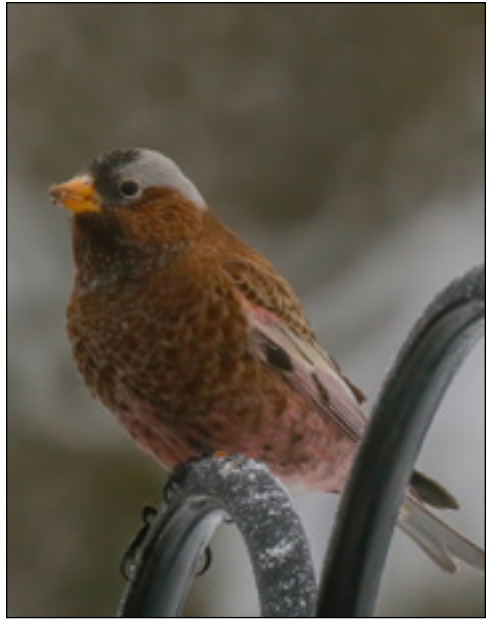
California Gull (*Larus californicus*) [Casual], 10 January 2021, Duluth Harbor, St. Louis County (record #2021-004, vote 6–1). Apparent second-cycle.

Magnificent Frigatebird (*Fregata magnificens*) [Accidental], 22 September 1988, Clearwater County (record #2006-098, reconsidered vote 7–0). Adult male. Initially not accepted as a Magnificent Frigatebird but accepted at the genus level (*The Loon* 62:13). Next, this record was discussed

again and by a 9–1 vote was accepted as a Magnificent Frigatebird (*The Loon* 65:33). This record was voted on a third time and not accepted as a Magnificent Frigatebird by a 2–8 vote, but was accepted as *Fregata* sp. (*The Loon* 79:55). Gauger-Metz and Schreiber (2002) say a male Great Frigatebird (*F. minor*) is “almost entirely black” and also state that its red gular sac “deflates, shrinks, and fades to pale orange soon after pairing.” Since they also state that “displaying begins December, peaks between late December and April, and usually ceases by May,” it seems unlikely that the Clearwater bird could reasonably have been this species since the gular sac was both evident and red in late September. And while Diamond and Schreiber (2002) say essentially the same thing for Magnificent Frigatebird, “gular sac becomes bright red and is inflated like a large balloon during courtship displays and early incubation period, but becomes pale orange and shrinks to become barely visible at other times of the year” note that this species’ breeding season is seasonally different with courtship begin-



Barn Owl, 19 October 2019, Otter Tail County.
Photo by Robert M. Dunlap.



Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch, 16 January 2021,
Koochiching County. Photo by Lon Baumgardt.

ning in early September and peaking in October (most eggs laid from about late October through mid January, though eggs can be in the nest as early as mid September). Indeed, one might expect an adult male Magnificent Frigatebird to show a red gular sac in late September. Many Committee members now believe the Great Frigatebird should virtually be discounted in evaluating Minnesota frigatebird records because there is only a single inland North American record from Oklahoma which was an anomalous sick, injured, and parasitized bird found on a building rooftop. Lesser Frigatebird (*F. ariel*) can be clearly eliminated because all age/sex plumage variations show some white. This bird was described as “entirely black with a red pouch under its all white bill.”

Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*) [Casual], 7 May 2021, Armstrong Wetland Restoration, Steele County (record #2021-026, vote 7–0). Adult, photographed. First county record.

Glossy Ibis, 14 May 2021, Stearns County (record #2021-029, vote 7–0). Adult, photographed. First county record.

Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*) [Casual], 4

May 2012, Egan, along Cliff Road at Greenleaf Drive West, near Holz Lake, Dakota County (record #2012-051, vote 7–0). Adult. Seventh state and first county record. Though this record was the seventh state record chronologically, there are now nine state records in total.

Mississippi Kite (*Ictinia mississippiensis*) [Casual], 22 May 2021, Garvin Park, Lyon County (record #2021-038, vote 7–0). Apparent adult, photographed. First county record.

Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*) [Casual], 19 October 2019, Otter Tail County (record #2019-069, vote 7–0). Single owlet at nest site, photographed. A second deceased owlet was also found at the nest site. There are three other records from the county in 1926, 1927, and 1929.

Lewis's Woodpecker (*Melanerpes lewis*) [Casual], 31 December 2020 – 30 April 2021, private residence, Morrison County, (record 2021-001, vote 7–0). Adult, photographed. Seventh state and first county record.

Gyr Falcon (*Falco rusticolus*) [Casual], 14 February 2021, Clay County (record #2021-007, vote 7–0). Gray morph juvenile.

Tropical/Couch's Kingbird (*Tyrannus* sp.),

16 August 2020, 30404 Sauk Valley Road, Stearns County (record #2020-090, vote 7-0). Photographed. First county record. MOURC has now accepted three Tropical/Couch's Kingbird records since the first was documented in 2011. All are fall records from the following counties: Lac qui Parle, Stearns, and St. Louis. A fourth fall record from Lake County is pending MOURC consideration. The chronological dates by month for all of the above-mentioned observations are 16 August 2020, 25 September 2020, 30 September 2020 (pending), and 28 October 2011.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (*Tyrannus forficatus*) [Casual], 7-11 May 2021, Aitkin County (record #2021-025, vote 7-0). Adult, photographed.

White-eyed Vireo (*Vireo griseus*) [Casual], 6 May 2021, Scott County (record #2021-023, vote 7-0). Adult, photographed.

Mountain Bluebird (*Sialia currucoides*) [Casual], 16 December 2018 - 17 January 2019, Isanti County (record #2018-068, vote 7-0). Adult, photographed. First county record.

Eurasian Tree Sparrow (*Passer montanus*) [Casual], 2-4 January 2021, Hampton, Dakota County (record #2021-002, vote 7-0). Adult.

Eurasian Tree Sparrow, 20 April 2021, Leonard, Clearwater County (record #2021-012, vote 7-0). Adult, photographed. First county record.

Eurasian Tree Sparrow, 27-28 April 2021, Windom, Cottonwood County (record #2021-014, vote 7-0). Two adults, photographed.

Eurasian Tree Sparrow, 2 May 2021, private residence Minneapolis, Hennepin County (record #2021-020, vote 7-0). Adult, photographed.

Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch (*Leucosticte tephrocotis*) [Casual], 11-18 January 2021, Loman, Koochiching County (record #2021-005, vote 7-0). Adult male of the interior form *L. t. tephrocotis*. Photographed. First county record.

Yellow-throated Warbler (*Setophaga dominica*) [Casual], 3-19 May 2021, Frontenac State Park, Goodhue County (record #2021-021, vote 7-0). Adult, photographed.

Yellow-throated Warbler, 6-8 May 2021, Reservoir Woods Park, Ramsey County (record



Painted Bunting, 22 May 2021, Northfield, Rice County. Photo by Alex Sundvall.

#2021-024, vote 7-0). Adult, photographed.

Yellow-throated Warbler, 16 May 2021, Carlos Avery Wildlife Management Area (Main Unit), Chisago County (record #2021-031, vote 7-0). Singing adult. Audio recorded.

Yellow-throated Warbler, 18 May 2021, Pike Point, Crow Wing County (record #2021-032, vote 7-0). Adult male, photographed.

Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*) [Casual], 22 May 2021, Carleton Upper Arboretum, Northfield, Rice County (record #2021-039, vote 7-0). Adult male, photographed.

The following records were voted on and were Not Accepted. (Please note that a record which is Not Accepted only means that the documentation was not complete or convincing enough to include the sighting in *The Loon*, the journal of the MOU, or in the MOU's archives of confirmed bird records. Such a vote does not necessarily mean the observer misidentified the bird or did not see it. Summaries of the reasons why a record was Not Accepted are included here. These are in no way intended to be critical of the observer. The only purpose is to highlight the difficulties an observer may encounter while identifying or

documenting these and similar species.

Western Sandpiper (*Calidris mauri*) [Casual], 23 August 2020, Lone Tree Lake, Lyon County (record #2020-089, vote 1–6). The observer's description is insufficiently detailed to adequately distinguish the bird from other *Calidris* species, particularly Semipalmated Sandpiper. The observer mentions field notes, but none are included.

Laughing Gull (*Leucophaeus atricilla*) [Casual], 19 July 2019, Spring Lake Park Reserve, Schaar's Bluff, Dakota County (record #2019-039, initial vote 4–3, recirculated vote 1–6). Upon recirculation, the consensus of the Committee was that the distance to the bird made it extremely unlikely that the intricate details described in the reports could have unmistakably been correct. In fact, measurements (Google maps) to the nearest sandbar show the distance to be approximately 670 meters, or over 0.4 miles.

Tricolored Heron (*Egretta tricolor*) [Accidental], 18 May 2021, Sand Point, Frontenac State Park, Goodhue County (record #2021-033, vote 0–7). Most Committee members felt this was a Great Blue Heron.

Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*) [Casual], 9 January 2021, approximately two miles south of Cyrus, County Road 3, Pope County (record #2021-003, vote 0–7). The ten-second observation was made without optics at dusk while driving. Most MOURC members did not think that under these conditions a Short-eared Owl was satisfactorily eliminated from consideration.

Mountain Bluebird (*Sialia currucoides*) [Casual], 13 October 2019, Taconite Harbor, Cook County (record #2019-054, initial vote 4–3, recirculated vote 3–4). In a closely-debated evaluation, the majority of the Committee members felt that the ten-second look at the calling flyover was insufficient to accept the observation.

The efforts of all those observers who document unusual species are greatly appreciated, whether or not the records are Accepted. Though photographs are always welcome, observers are strongly encouraged to submit written documentation based on contemporaneous field notes for all records. The Committee acknowledges with thanks those who provided written descriptions for the records

listed in this article: Dean Wattermann, Brad Abendroth, Karl J. Bardon, Frederic A. Barker, Dave Bartkey, Cole Bauer, Lon Baumgardt, Dedrick Benz, Judd Brink, Conny M. Brunell, Paul E. Budde, Alex Burchard, Thomas Burns, Philip C. Chu, Shawn Conrad, R. Doroff, Robert M. Dunlap, Kim R. Eckert, Tayt A. Eiden, Kimberly A. Emerson, Becca Engdahl, Frank Fabbro, Bruce A. Fall, James Grant, Liz Harper, Melissa Hein, Nancy Henke, Ann M. Hertz, Anthony X. Hertz, Pete Hoeger, Luke Hollander, Ezra Hosch, Isaac Hosch, Paul E. Jantscher, Samuel Jolly, R. Kacures, Tom Jones, Tyson Kahler, Douglas W. Kieser, M. Koetter, Mike Kratz, Tim Lamey, Val R. Landwehr, Demelza Larson, Ann Luloff, Craig R. Mandel, William C. Marengo, Nolan Meyer, Chris Moe, David F. Neitzel, Devon Novy, Andrew Nyhus, Dan Orr, Jason Osowski, Gleora Palm, Douglas L. Pierzina, Aaron Pietsch, Kenneth M. Schumacher, Susan Schumacher, Gregg Severson, Sabrina Silvestre, Andrew D. Smith, M. Spoden, Paul Suchanek, Alex Sundvall, Peder H. Svingen, Howard Towle, Thomas A. Tustison, Justin Watts, Garrett Wee, Bob Williams, and Roy Zimmerman. Many observers documented records of rare Regular species which were not voted on by the Committee; though not cited here, their efforts are greatly appreciated.

The Committee welcomes questions or comments from MOU members regarding any record in particular or our procedures in general. More information including our bylaws and current checklist can be found at <<http://moumn.org/mourc>>.

Summary: 52 records voted on — 47 Accepted, 5 Not Accepted.

Literature Cited

- Diamond, Antony W. and Elizabeth A. Schreiber. 2002. Magnificent Frigatebird (*Fregata magnificens*). In *The Birds of North America*, Alan F. Poole and Frank B. Gill, Editors. Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, NY.
- Gauger-Metz, Vanessa H. and Elizabeth A. Schreiber. 2002. Great Frigatebird (*Fregata minor*). In *The Birds of North America*, Shawn M. Billerman, Editor. Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, NY.

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